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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR
THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES
EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR
DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA
Seventh session
Nairobi, 7-18 August 1995
Agenda item 2

IDENTIFICATION OF AN ORGANIZATION TO HOUSE THE GLOBAL MECHANISM

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Further to paragraph 3 of document A/AC.241/33, attached is the response received from the Chief Executive Officer of the GEF to the letter sent by the Chairman of the INCD regarding the Global Mechanism.

GE.95-63236

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Letter from Mr. Mohamed T. El-Ashry, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman, GEF

21 July 1995

Dear Mr. Diallo,

I am writing in regard to the letter dated January 18, 1995, addressed to me from Mr. Bo Kjellen, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. In his letter, Mr. Kjellen requested that I address a statement to you on the interest and capacity of the Global Environment Facility to host the Global Mechanism to be established in accordance with Article 21 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.

I have given serious consideration to this request, including a careful review of the provisions of the Convention, and in particular Article 21.5 which outlines the functions of the Mechanism. I have also submitted a draft of this letter to the GEF Council for its review and comment.

My conclusion is that the objectives of the Desertification Convention are quite extensive in that they encompass effective action at all levels to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in affected areas. The scope of the GEF is considerably more narrow than the scope of the Convention. The GEF is a mechanism for international cooperation for the purpose of providing new and additional grant and concessional funding to meet the agreed incremental costs of measures to achieve agreed *global environmental benefits* in four focal areas: climate change, biological diversity, international waters, and ozone layer depletion. Within this scope, the GEF does address the agreed incremental costs of activities concerning land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, as they relate to the four focal areas. The broader objectives of the Convention clearly extend beyond the mandate of the GEF.

Taking into account the agreed scope of the GEF and Article 20(b) of the Desertification Convention, we are committed to financing project and program activities concerning land degradation as it relates to the four focal areas. As you know, at the GEF Council meeting that was held February 22-24, 1995, the Council reviewed and endorsed a paper that describes the scope and preliminary operational strategy for GEF activities in the area of land degradation. This paper will be revised and incorporated into the proposed GEF long-term operational strategy to be reviewed by the Council at its meeting in October 1995. Within this context, and pending decision of COP 1 to identify the institution to house the Convention's Global Mechanism, we look forward to contributing to activities that are supportive of the Desertification Convention, including cooperation with its secretariat.

I wish you every success in your consideration of this matter at the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Sincerely,

Mohamed T. El-Ashry
Chief Executive Officer
and Chairman